

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Office of the President

Vice President, Systemwide Human Resources

University of California

Oakland, California

The University of California (UC) seeks applications and nominations for the position of Vice President of Systemwide Human Resources (VP). Reporting directly to the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (EVP-COO), this enterprise-wide senior leadership role provides strategic direction, policy leadership, and systemwide oversight of all human resources functions across the UC.

Founded in 1868, the UC system is recognized as one of the world's largest and most prestigious academic institutions, with a tripartite mission of research, teaching, and public service, and an annual operating budget of more than \$51.4 billion. The system is the second largest employer in California, employing over 266,000 faculty and staff across ten campuses, six academic health centers, and three affiliated national laboratories. The ten campuses that make up the UC system – Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz – collectively enroll approximately 299,400 students and have a combined 2.5 million alumni living and working around the world. Another half million people benefit from UC's continuing education courses each year, as well as from research centers and educational programs operating throughout the state. Each year, UC generates more than \$82.1 billion in economic activity in California and contributes about \$55.8 billion to Gross State Product annually. UC's scope extends beyond its campus locations, with its national laboratories, medical centers, and outreach programs in neighboring communities, throughout California, and around the world.

In this context, the VP will have a remarkable opportunity for impact, with oversight of a broad systemwide portfolio of HR functions, including the full spectrum of employee and labor relations, total rewards (compensation, health and welfare benefits, and retirement programs), workforce and talent planning, policy development and compliance, organizational and leadership development, HR finance and administration, and UC Office of the President (UCOP) human resources. Working in close partnership with campus and location HR leaders, the VP is charged with designing and implementing a forward-looking, people-centered strategy and workplace culture that engages, supports, and empowers the University's workforce and with leading responsive, effective, and future-focused human capital strategies aligned with the UC's mission and goals.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Located in Oakland, California, the [University of California Office of the President](#) (UCOP) is the systemwide headquarters of the University of California, managing its fiscal and business operations and supporting the academic and research missions across its campuses, national labs, and medical centers. The Office of the President coordinates activities that allow a complex and unique system to operate efficiently as one university, furthering its public interest, academic, and research missions. It oversees and manages programs that serve the entire university system, allowing UC locations to capture the savings and efficiencies that come from centralized operations.

Learn more about UC system leadership and governance below.

Systemwide Human Resources

[Systemwide Human Resources \(SWHR\)](#) is responsible for developing a vision, strategy, and environment to engage, empower, and involve the system's human capital, both present and future. SWHR strives to foster a healthy, equitable, and inclusive UC workplace and maximize HR efficiency, consistency, and innovation while supporting employee retention and engagement. The SWHR portfolio includes:

- **[Employee and Labor Relations](#):** Fosters employee engagement, negotiates and administers local and systemwide labor agreements, and provides multi-faceted support toward ensuring an inclusive, diverse, collaborative and productive work environments across the UC system.
- **[Total Rewards](#):** Creates and delivers principled total rewards (compensation, health and welfare benefits, and retirement programs) that support the recruitment and retention of world-class faculty and staff, and involved retirees, in furtherance of UC's mission, values and vision.
- **[Workforce and Talent Planning](#):** Provides HR strategies and resources to support the university in acquiring, developing, and retaining top talent to align its staff workforce with its long-term strategic goals and fulfill its mission and vision.
- **[Policy Development and Compliance](#):** Develops and interprets personnel policies and other employment-related programs, guidelines, and procedures for staff employees.
- **[Organizational and Leadership Development](#):** Provides strategic consulting and partnership in service of organization-wide, divisional, or departmental initiatives that will strengthen UCOP.
- **[Finance and Administration](#):** Provides leadership and strategic support in the areas of finance, administration, communication, project management, compliance, and analytics to advance the overall effectiveness of SHR.
- **[UCOP Human Resources](#):** Oversees human resources programs and policies for employees at the Office of the President.

SWHR works closely with UC Systemwide Shared Services for critical processes such as the annual open enrollment process for employees and eligible retirees, or the transition of employees into retirement.

To learn more about SWHR, please visit: <https://www.ucop.edu/human-resources/index.html>.

UC SYSTEM LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Board of Regents

The UC is governed by the 26-member Board of Regents, which exercises approval over University policies, financial affairs, tuition and fees with the authority to delegate powers as it determines to be in the best interest of the University. The Board appoints the UC President and its principal officers. 18 Regents, appointed by the Governor, serve 12-year terms. The Board also appoints one student member appointed by the Regents for a one-year term, and seven ex officio members, including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the Assembly, Superintendent of Public Instruction, President and Vice President of the Alumni Associations of UC, and the President of the University. In addition, two faculty members, the chair and vice chair of the systemwide Academic Senate sit on the board as non-voting members. It is the responsibility of the board to set policy and the responsibility of the University administration to implement and carry out policy, which includes responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the University.

President

The President is the executive head of the University and has full authority and responsibility over the administration of all affairs and operations of the University, except those activities within the responsibility of the Principal Officers, and sets the University's direction, goals, and strategy. The President implements the policies and objectives of the Board of Regents, and keeps the Board informed of all significant developments affecting the University.

James B. Milliken became the UC's 22nd president on August 1, 2025. President Milliken has more than 30 years of experience serving in leadership roles at large institutions. Most recently, he served as chancellor of the University of Texas System (UT) from 2018-2025, where he also held the Lee Hage and Joseph D. Jamail Regents Chair in Higher Education Leadership. As UT's chancellor, he led one of the largest public university systems in the United States, composed of 14 academic and health institutions, including seven medical schools and five Carnegie R1 research universities. He led efforts to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying state and nation, including a commitment to increasing training, education, and research programs in information technology, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, public health, and medicine.

Shared Governance

Shared governance among the Board of Regents, the President and his administration, and the Academic Senate is one of the distinctive features of the UC. The system of shared governance gives University faculty, operating through the Academic Senate, a voice in the operation of the University. Faculty participation in governance of the University through the agency of the Academic Senate is a guiding force that unifies the ten campuses of the University into a single system under a uniform standard of excellence. The faculty, through the Academic Senate, advise the Board of Regents and the administration

on the development of policies and procedures that will enhance the research and education enterprise while maintaining appropriate standards of conduct with necessary and reasonable oversight.

ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF SYSTEMWIDE HUMAN RESOURCES

Reporting directly to the EVP-COO, the VP is responsible for aligning HR practices across UC with the institution's strategic priorities, core values, and longstanding public service mission. The VP has oversight of a broad and high-impact portfolio of systemwide HR function, and oversees a team of 180 human resources professionals within SWHR, including the following direct reports:

- Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer and Chief of Staff;
- Associate Vice President, Employee and Labor Relations;
- Associate Vice President, Total Rewards;
- Associate Vice President, Strategy & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion;
- Chief Human Resources Officer, UCOP Human Resources.

The VP manages an annual operating budget of approximately \$50 million and serves as the principal human resources advisor to the UC Board of Regents, the UC president, campus chancellors, medical center CEOs, and other senior executives across the UC system.

Key Areas of Responsibility

Strategic Vision, Leadership, and Policy Development

- Serves as the senior executive responsible for strategy development and execution of a human resources vision aligned with the UC's mission, goals, and values;
- Develops and implements systemwide policies and practices in areas such as health benefits, executive and staff compensation, retirement saving programs, talent management, organizational development, labor and employee relations, and workforce planning;
- Provides executive leadership over UC's compensation programs, health, and welfare benefits – a \$2 billion portfolio – and defined contribution retirement offerings, ensuring that UC's benefit and compensation strategies and structures are market-competitive, financially sustainable, equitable, and aligned with UC's public mission and regulatory obligations;
- Ensures organization's compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and internal policies, collaborating closely with legal counsel to manage risk, support internal investigations, and ensure legally sound practices. Guides training and accountability measures to ensure legal and policy obligations are upheld; and
- Fosters collaboration through shared governance and leads systemwide human capital transformation initiatives. Drives modernization and excellence in HR technology, policy, assessment, and compliance. Oversees policy development, implementation, and interpretation.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

- Serves as a key member of the EVP-COO's executive team and as an advisor to the President, Regents, chancellors, medical center CEOs, and other system leaders;

- Convenes the UC HR Leadership Council and actively engages campus, medical center, and lab HR leaders to align systemwide initiatives and share best practices;
- Acts as a liaison between UCOP and location HR units to drive coordinated service delivery and strategic alignment;
- Builds and nurtures strong relationships, fostering collaborative and productive engagement and ensuring timely communication related to policy, initiatives, issues, and value to key stakeholders; and
- Collaborates with campus and location partners to embed principles into talent development and organizational effectiveness, Integrating stakeholder feedback into meaningful strategic improvements.

Enterprise Commitment to People and Performance

- Guides enterprise-level strategies for leadership development, talent acquisition, employee engagement, and workforce planning, prioritizing a culture of excellence, ethics, and accountability;
- Partners with campus leaders to foster an inclusive workplace for faculty, staff, and students and drives initiatives that ensure inclusive practices, respectful workplace cultures, and strong leadership pipelines; and
- Oversees UC's systemwide labor relations strategy, including engagement with multiple unions—representing over 150,000 employees—to support long-term organizational stability, workforce engagement, and productive labor-management partnerships.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The VP is expected to be a highly visible, values-driven, and forward-thinking leader—one who builds trust, strengthens organizational capacity, anticipates emerging challenges, and positions the UC workforce for continued success in a rapidly evolving higher education and healthcare landscape. The successful candidate will bring many, if not all, of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- At least 10 years of senior executive HR leadership experience in complex, multi-unit organizations with central and decentralized operations;
- Demonstrated leadership in strategy, policy development, labor relations, benefits, talent management, and change leadership;
- Experience leading HR in a unionized environment with demonstrated success in negotiations and relationship management;
- Exceptional communication skills with the ability to effectively engage governing boards, executives, employees, and external partners;
- High emotional intelligence, political acumen, ethical integrity, and a strong public service orientation;
- Experience with large-scale HR technology and operational modernization efforts;
- A track record of advancing inclusive excellence and building collaborative, high-performing teams; and
- Familiarity with higher education and/or public sector organizations.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

UCOP is required to provide a reasonable estimate of the compensation range for this role. This range

UCOP is required to provide a reasonable estimate of the compensation range for this role. This range takes into account the wide range of factors that are considered in making compensation decisions including but not limited to experience, skills, knowledge, abilities, education, licensure and certifications, and other business and organizational needs. It is not typical for an individual to be offered a salary at or near the top of the range for a position. Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience. The full salary range for this position is \$352K - \$584K. The budgeted salary range that the University reasonably expects for this position is \$380K-\$430K.

This position is located on-site in Oakland, CA.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to the Isaacson, Miller consultants supporting the search:

Rebecca Kennedy, Managing Partner
Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Managing Partner
Carley Davenport, Managing Associate
Thea Kosmack, Senior Search Coordinator

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. **For best consideration, please apply by October 20, 2025 via the Isaacson, Miller website:** <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-california-office-president/vice-president-systemwide-human-resources>.

Applications must be complete to be reviewed for consideration. A complete application includes: 1) CV, 2) [completion of the UC Applicant Self-Identification forms](#). Applicants are also strongly encouraged to submit a cover letter.

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status, or other protected status under state or federal law.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by the University of California. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by the University of California would supersede any conflicting information in this document.